

SPB POSTSUPPRESSION PROJECT EVALUATION FOR THE
NATIONAL FORESTS IN ALABAMA.

by

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INTRODUCTION

A suppression project for minimizing losses associated with southern pine beetle (SPB) infestations was initiated during the spring of 1980. Forest Pest Management (FPM) recommended that this suppression project be initiated based on the results of a biological evaluation conducted in 1979. All the districts on the Bankhead, Talladega, and Tuskegee National Forests actively engaged in project suppression activities including presuppression-operational surveys and prevention/suppression alternatives. These activities were conducted in accordance with the current SPB project control plan.

TARGETS

Salvage and protected volume targets for FY 80 were predicted based on losses expected under epidemic populations similar to those existing in 1979. Table 1 summarizes these predictions for each ranger district. The total salvage target for FY 80 was 57,510 MBF.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Presuppression flights flown by all the districts covered areas exceeding 2.4 million acres. Adequate aerial surveillance was conducted at 2-4 week intervals from May - August.

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Actual salvage volumes for the National Forests in Alabama totaled 17,700 MBF or 31% of the predicted targets. This reduction in targeted salvage volumes was due to an unexpected decline in beetle activity. This decline is reflected in a reduction in the number of spots per 1000 acres between FY 79 and FY 80. Table 2 summarizes these data. A 58% reduction in total spots per 1000 acres accounts for the 69% reduction between targeted salvage and actual salvage volumes.

SUMMARY

The SPB suppression project conducted in FY 80 has succeeded in minimizing losses. Beetle populations predicted to reach epidemic levels in FY 80 declined to endemic levels resulting in a reduction in necessary salvage activities.

The southern pine beetle information system (SPBIS) was required for the first time in FY 80 for all districts having SPB suppression projects. Consequently, inconsistencies in the data have occurred. At this time, efforts are being made to clarify the instructions and develop a training program which should minimize these errors. Plans are also underway to make use of the data obtained from SPBIS more comprehensively. Cooperation between the districts and FPM should help build a reliable SPBIS data bank which will provide district personnel with timely and valuable information for the management of SPB projects, as well as allow FPM to utilize the SPBIS system for SPARS reports, postsuppression evaluations, and possibly for some SPB population prediction.

TABLE 1. Targeted Salvage and Protected Volumes for FY 80

FOREST/RANGER DISTRICT	TARGETS	
	VOL. SALVAGED (MBF)	VOL. PROTECTED (MBF)
TALLADEGA NF ^{1/}		
Shoal Creek RD	18,304	16,821
Talladega RD	20,691	9,256
Oakmulgee RD	2,923	1,161
TUSKEGEE NF ^{1/}	621	213
BANKHEAD NF ^{2/}		
Bankhead	1,723	951
Black Warrior	13,248	10,946
TOTAL	57,510	39,348

^{1/} Target volumes complied from "Biological Evaluation of the Southern Pine Beetle on the Talladega and Tuskegee National Forests in Alabama" Report No. 80-2-1 (Smith, 1979).

^{2/} Target volumes compiled from "Biological Evaluation of the Southern Pine Beetle on the Bankhead National Forest in Alabama" Report No. 80-2-2 (Smith, 1979).

TABLE 2. Spots Per 1000 Acres for FY 79 and FY 80

FOREST/RANGER DISTRICT	1979 SPOTS/1000 AC. ^{1/}	1980 SPOTS/1000 AC. ^{2/}	% CHANGE
TALLADEGA NF			
Shoal Creek RD	1	.32	- 68
Talladega RD	3.19	.02	- 99
Oakmulgee RD	.50	.06	- 88
TUSKEGEE NF	1.76	2.81	+ 60
BANKHEAD NF			
Bankhead RD	3.50	1.46	- 58
Black Warrior RD	2.19	.35	- 84
TOTAL	2.02	.84	- 58

^{1/} SPOTS/1000 AC. compiled from SPB Biological Evaluation Reports No. 80-2-1 and No. 80-2-2 (Smith, 1979).

^{2/} SPOTS/1000 AC. compiled from SPB Biological Evaluation Report No. 81-2-5 (Weatherby, 1980).